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ALLIANCES IN ACTION

Partnership For Prosperity

Farm services offered by tractor dealerships increase productivity



Rameshbhai Ranipa, owner of a Mahindra and Mahindra tractor dealership in India, was one of the first dealers to establish a Samriddhi Center to provide services to farmers. Photo: USAID

Partners: University of Wisconsin and Mahindra and Mahindra

Development challenge: India has a rapidly growing population but limited arable land constrains agricultural growth. To meet future market demand, farms in India need to develop more efficient and more productive approaches to providing affordable food.

Business Challenge: As the owner of a successful Mahindra and Mahindra tractor dealership and a top sales performer in India, Rameshbhai Ranipa was skeptical about changing how he did business. The Mahindra Farm Equipment Division, however, knew that tractor sales had saturated the market and there were few opportunities for growth. Like other dealership owners, Mr. Ranipa faced two options: either innovate or stagnate.

Approach: The USAID Partnership for Innovation and Knowledge in Agriculture (PIKA) brings together businesses, universities, scientists, agriculture specialists, and farmers to develop and deploy new agricultural technologies that improve productivity. The project aims to help India meet its food needs through improved production, markets, and distribution systems, as well as spur economic growth in agriculture industries across the region.

USAID and Mahindra and Mahindra dealership owners, like Mr. Ranipa, are now investing in *Samriddhi* (which means prosperity in Hindi) Centers. These centers provide technical services through on-site laboratories as well as counseling and information on farm technology to help farmers expand their business opportunities.

Beginning with eight *Samriddhi* Centers in 2006, five years later, 135 centers operate across a distribution network of dealerships to provide soil and water testing, as well as on-farm consultations and workshops on innovative farm practices. According to Mr. Ranipa, "The change in the farmers is the most remarkable change I've ever seen." Today, the innovations developed at the *Samriddhi* Centers, drive product innovation and extend good agriculture practices for increasing farm productivity across the country.